Dear Rutgers Master Gardener Volunteer:

Thank you for your dedication to the Rutgers Master Gardener program in Passaic County.  Your volunteer hours are very important to County Freeholders, Rutgers University and the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, and for your own recognition and awards.  Please remember to record your volunteer time at approved Rutgers/MGAPC sites.  
  
A volunteer becomes a Certified Rutgers Master Gardener after successfully completing the training course and finishing 70 hours of volunteer work which should include the following:

* 10 hours on the MG Helpline located at 930 Riverview Dr. STE 250, Totowa, NJ
* 60 hours in other approved MG projects, including MGAPC general meetings.

Certifications are given at graduation day.  After certification, active Rutgers Master Gardeners need to volunteer 25 hours (“doing”) and 10 hours of continued education (attending appropriate seminars, lectures, or workshops) **yearly**.  
  
What counts as "doing" or volunteer time?   
- The Rutgers Master Gardener Coordinator of Passaic County, Cecilia Diaz, approves the ***project, site or event.*** Please fill out the “application form for project proposal” and submit to Cecilia for approval. This could include municipal, county or state building beautification programs, horticultural therapy/education projects and, educational programs at schools, libraries, museums and other sites.

- The ***project*** receives MGAPC funding. In addition, if you are on a committee of a recognized Rutgers MG project to review plans, coordinate programs, make budgets, hire port-a johns, that time counts towards the project “MG outreach”   
- **MG *Helpline*** hours are at the RCE Totowa office. Spaces are limited that is why we require that volunteers sign up ahead of time through the better impact software. Travel time is included.

- ***Outreach hours*** are at the approved Rutgers MG/MGAPC site, including planning meetings, design meetings, maintenance visits, etc. Travel time is included.   
**- *Teaching hours*** are the times that you have taught a group of people at a meeting or site, given a presentation related to horticulture of MG program (garden tours, community gardens, native plants, horticultural therapy/education, classroom lectures, garden tours, etc.). To report these hours you must COMPLETE THE AUDIENCE CONTACT FORM which is available in the HOME page of your better impact account.

-Write the date, the activity (title of lecture and location), and the number of adults or children in attendance.

-These contact numbers and activities are very important for the Rutgers Master Gardener outreach efforts.

- If you need Rutgers fact sheets, contact Cecilia Diaz with anticipation, to help you with getting copies for your event

- ***Administrative hours*** are time at MGAPC and MGANJ meetings, other MGAPC work (newsletter prep, coordinating meetings, etc.) Travel time is included.

What is **NOT** approved for volunteer time?  
- Working on not approved projects. Working your own property, your friends’ or neighbors' properties.   
- Activities and meetings at other garden clubs (unless you are teaching or leading an educational program).

What counts as "learning" or continuing education?  
- An educational program related to horticulture lead by a teacher or leader.  ***Guided*** garden tours, adult education classes, botanical garden programs, RCE training, MGAPC programs, etc.   
- All continuing education credits must be approved by the Rutgers Master Gardener Coordinator.

-When login hours for continuing education you must provide feedback of the activity through better impact. Feedback needed is: name of speaker, title of lecture, location, what did you learn?

- Travel time is not to be included.

-You will find approved CE opportunities in better impact

What is NOT approved as continuing education?  
- Watching television  
- Reading books, magazines, or the internet

-Internet courses without a teacher or without certification or exam upon completion  
- Anything without a teacher or leader

Remember to keep track of your hours and log them through better impact. If you need assistance with reporting your hours through the software, please call Jo-Ann Pituch or me.

 If you have any questions, please e-mail, or call: [cd765@njaes.rutgers.edu](mailto:cd765@njaes.rutgers.edu) , (973)305-5748  
  
Thanks for your love of gardening and for all that you do.   
  
  
Sincerely,

*Cecilia Diaz*

Program Associate II,

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Passaic Co.

Revised 05/8/20